



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **PARADISE VALLEY WOMAN ARRESTED FOR IMMIGRATION FRAUD**

PHOENIX – A prominent Phoenix socialite was arrested without incident at her multi-million dollar Paradise Valley home today by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents on immigration fraud charges.

Sonia Iris Falcone, 40, was named in a four-count sealed indictment handed down by a federal grand jury last month on a variety of charges, including perjury, unlawful possession of an immigration document, making a false statement on an immigration document, and attempted unlawful procurement of naturalization.

The indictment, which was unsealed today with Falcone's arrest, alleges that the Bolivian national fraudulently obtained an alien registration card by engaging in marriage fraud and that she perjured herself and made a false statement related to information on a citizenship application.

"The vast majority of people we prosecute who are in this country illegally are of modest means," said U.S. Attorney Paul Charlton. "This case is reminder that people with significant resources will be prosecuted as well."

Falcone made her initial appearance in federal court this afternoon. She was released after surrendering her Bolivian passport, her "green card," and the passports of her children to ICE agents.

"Resorting to perjury and making false statements to get immigration benefits are extremely serious offenses," said Roberto Medina, special agent-in-charge for ICE investigations in Arizona. "Those who choose to so blatantly compromise our immigration laws are going to be held accountable and these kinds of flagrant violations will not be tolerated."

A conviction for unlawful possession of an immigration document, making a false statement on an immigration document, and attempted unlawful procurement of naturalization each carries a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The perjury charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

Falcone's trial is scheduled to begin April 4.

#ICE#

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*